

Interactive Teaching Method Teachers' Association

Children and Vulnerable Adults: Good Practice Policy

Introduction

The Interactive Teaching Method Teachers' Association (ITMTA) and its members are committed to teaching in a manner which protects children and vulnerable adults from harm.

The following paragraphs are intended as a code for establishing and encouraging good practice in the teaching of children and vulnerable adults. Although this document is not yet formal policy, it is hoped that it will be closely adhered to in 2010 and then refined and adopted as policy in 2011.

Until that time, all ITMTA Members are strongly encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to respect and safeguard the children or vulnerable adults taking part in lessons, workshops or other activities.

Definitions

A child is defined as a person up to the age of 18 in The Children Act 1989.

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over "who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation." "Who Decides," Lord Chancellor's Department (1997).

ISA is the Independent Safeguarding Authority. It is a body created to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults.

CRB, or Criminal Records Bureau, is an Executive Agency of the Home Office. It provides access to criminal records information through its Checking Service.

Code of Behaviour: general principles of good conduct

All ITMTA Members are strongly encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to respect and safeguard the children or vulnerable adults taking part in lessons, workshops or other activities.

In addition, ITMTA members are required to commit to

- listening to children and vulnerable adults;
- encouraging and praising children and vulnerable adults, as appropriate;
- valuing and respecting children and vulnerable adults as individuals;
- involving children and vulnerable adults in decision making, as appropriate.

Good Practice

The following are examples of good practice:

- Involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. reminding them of their responsibility for their child/charge in the teaching room);
- Working in an open way with a child or vulnerable adult, avoiding unobserved situations. Where there is no other adult observer, ITMTA members are advised to teach with an open door, or to gain written consent from the parent/carer agreeing to the lesson conditions;
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate professional relationship with participants (e.g. as with any student, it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or vulnerable adult);
- Ensuring that any form of manual support/contact is provided openly and appropriately within the lesson context and design. Children and vulnerable adults should always be consulted and their agreement gained;
- Keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance issues;
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children and vulnerable adults and not pushing them against their will;

- Obtaining written information from parents/carers about any medical conditions that may affect the conduct of the lesson, workshop or other activity. Where necessary, ITMTA Members should gain parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.

Practice to be avoided

- ITMTA members spending excessive amounts of time alone with a child or vulnerable adult, away from others;
- It is not good practice to take children or vulnerable adults alone in a car on journeys, however short. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents/carers;
- ITMTA Members should not meet with children outside organised activities, unless it is with the knowledge and consent of parents/carers.

Practice never to be sanctioned

ITMTA Members should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;
- Allow children or vulnerable adults to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child or vulnerable adult, even in fun;
- Allow allegations made by a child or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
- Do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults, that they can do for themselves.

Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents/carers of the child or vulnerable adult are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a student;
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner;
- If a student appears to be sexually aroused by your actions;
- If a student significantly misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

ISA registration and CRB Disclosures

From July 2010, UK teachers who work with children and vulnerable adults are advised to register with ISA. This is a one-off registration costing around £64. ISA will securely store information about people's ISA status for employers and voluntary organisations to use when they are recruiting. See <http://www.isa-gov.org.uk/Default.aspx?page=314> for an explanation of why ITM teachers fall under the aegis of this body, and who is likely to be able to check if an ITM teacher is ISA-registered.

Those who work with children or vulnerable adults on a regular basis, or who work regularly in schools, FE colleges or other similar institutions are also advised to obtain a CRB Disclosure. This is a document that is dated, and which states that on the date the document was requested, the applicant had no recorded convictions on police records and was not on any ISA Barred list.

Teachers living outside the United Kingdom are advised to check their local legislation on Safeguarding Children and to make certain that they conform to any policy requirements.

Use of images of children or vulnerable adults

ITM Members may occasionally wish to take audiovisual footage of a student for educational or marketing purposes. The following paragraphs are intended to safeguard appropriate use and storage of images.

- Written permission will be obtained from parents/carers, and where possible, children or vulnerable adults, before photographs are taken;
- Written permission will be obtained from parents/carers, and where possible, children or vulnerable adults, if photographs are to be used for publicity purposes;

- Care will be taken to try either to obscure individual faces or to not allocate names to individuals in any photographs posted in a public place (e.g. notice boards, website etc.). This is to ensure that the subject of the photograph is not identifiable;
- If photographs or video recordings are made of children or vulnerable adults for publicity purposes, the resulting files, videos or photographs will be stored securely on Member-owned premises using password protection where possible.